

# Eskimo Walrus Commission

**KAWERAK, INC.**



National Park Service's 2007  
Beringia Days

# Eskimo Walrus Commission

The **Eskimo Walrus Commission** (EWC) was formed in 1978 and is now represented by 19 coastal walrus hunting communities from Northern, Northwestern, and Western Alaska. EWC was modeled after the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission and functions under Kawerak, Inc., a regional non-profit organization in Nome that provides tribal services to Bering Strait communities.

**EWC** is a Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) Section 119 Alaska Native Organization that receives funding through US Fish & Wildlife Service.



# Program and Projects

- Current MMPA Policy allows EWC to co-manage subsistence uses of the Pacific walrus.
- With FWS, hold spring (or fall) hunter meetings.
- Promote Walrus Harvest Guidelines & Marking, Tagging, Reporting Program.
- Translated Walrus Harvest Guideline into 3 different Alaska Native languages and advertised during spring hunts.
- Hired EWC Biomonitor Specialist to assist Staff and FWS in developing a cooperative “Walrus Biomonitoring Plan”.



# Walrus Biomonitoring Plan

- Pilot project to develop a community-based and -approved research study plan and biological sampling method.
- Initiated pilot project in two communities during spring 2007.



# Subsistence Walrus Hunting Video

- With IRAs assistance, community members from Gambell and Savoonga received training and instruction as videographers to document hunts, interview elders/youth/young hunters, edit, and produce a “best practices” video for each community.
- Video Committee formed to provide guidance with representation by EWC, USFWS, Gambell, Savoonga, and Bristol Bay Native Association.





# Traditional Knowledge Advisor

**TEK Advisor** from St. Lawrence Island assisted in several walrus tagging projects in 2005-2007, also reported on his activities during EWC annual meetings and at spring meetings in Gambell & Savoonga.



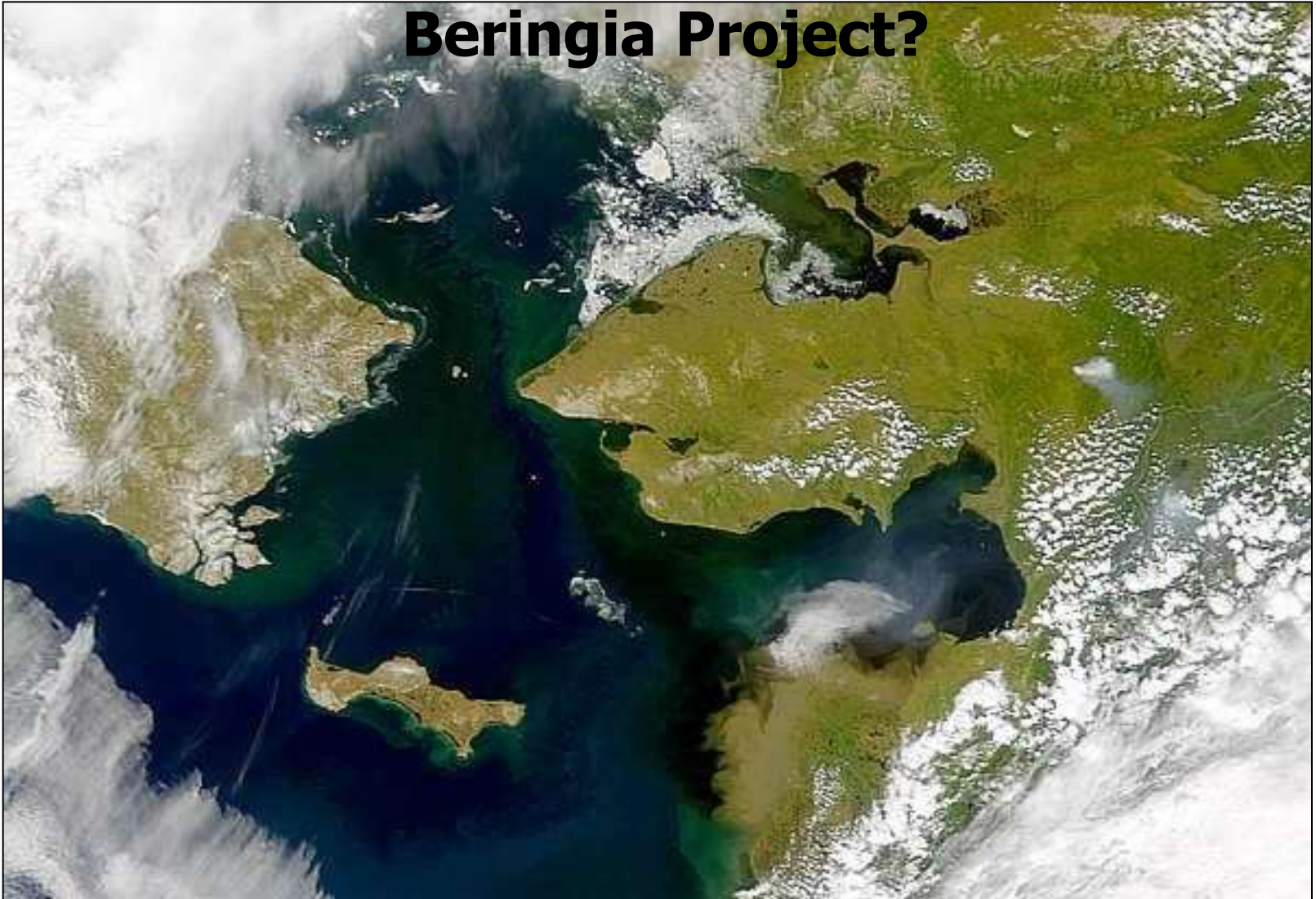
# Conserving Our Culture Through Traditional Management

A collection of traditional knowledge on Pacific walrus from elders and active hunters.





# **Why Chukotka-Alaska Walrus Beringia Project?**





# Shared Traditions and Resource Management Concerns



- Healthy walrus population
  - Protecting traditional haul-outs
    - Bottom Trawling Fishing
  - Shipping
- Climate Change
  - Oil and Gas Exploration
  - What could be next?

# Chukotka Harvest Monitoring Program

Building momentum from previously funded program to develop community-based monitoring of walrus.



Project plans will lead towards a range of bilateral research and management programs.

Project benefits walrus conservation, education, and the continued relationship between walrus dependent communities in Chukotka and Alaska.

# EWC Mission Statement

Encourage self regulation of walrus hunting and management of walrus stock by Alaska Natives who use and need walrus to survive.

